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**USTR Barshefsky Hails Overwhelming House Vote on WTO,
Bipartisan Vote Rejects U.S. Withdrawal From WTO**

United States Trade Representative Charlene Barshefsky hailed last night's overwhelmingly bipartisan vote by the House of Representatives to reject a resolution that would withdraw Congressional support for continued United States participation in the World Trade Organization (WTO). Today's vote, 363-56, far exceeds the 288-146 vote cast in November 1994, which established U.S. membership in the newly-created WTO.

"Today's vote is a clear validation of the benefits of our membership in the WTO and sends a strong signal to our trading partners that they can count on the United States' continued leadership in the global trading system," said Ambassador Barshefsky. "The opening of markets around the world, which has been a top priority of this Administration, has been a driving force in the longest period of economic growth in our history. The United States is the world's largest exporting and importing nation, carrying on \$2.2 trillion in two-way trade with the world in 1999. That represents a \$1 trillion expansion in trade since 1992."

"Today's strong show of support for the WTO, combined with last month's passage of the Africa and Caribbean trade bills, and the House's passage of Permanent Normal Trade Relations for China all ensure that increased trade will continue to fuel our economic growth. Finally, I would like to thank Speaker Hastert and Minority Leader Gephardt for their leadership and support on this issue," said Ambassador Barshefsky.